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ABSTRACT

This paper is a study of the organizational changes that were implemented at Nova Scotia Community College (NSCC) (Canada) over a 3-year period beginning in 1998. NSCC consists of 13 campuses enrolling 7,000 students in a range of postsecondary certificate and diploma programs, as well as about 500 students in adult learning programs. The College's institutional changes were instigated by NSCC's new president who implemented "Strategic Directions," which includes a strategic plan, mission and vision statements, and articulation of organizational values, all of which were approved by NSCC's Board of Governors. The study argues that employee job satisfaction is a key indicator of positive organizational transformation. An institution-wide survey of employee job satisfaction was conducted in 1999 and again in the spring of 2001. In both instances, at least 86% of faculty and staff participated. There was a 13% increase in the level of satisfaction regarding treatment of employees, a 19% increase in satisfaction with organizational leadership, and a 10% increase in satisfaction with opportunities for advancement. The president devised the strategic planning process as a collaboration between administration, faculty, students, the board, and staff members. This paper details the reorganization process. Appended are the mission statement, an organizational chart, and a strategic plan overview. (Contains 27 references.) (NB)

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Early Signs of Success
A Case Study in the Organizational Transformation of a Community College

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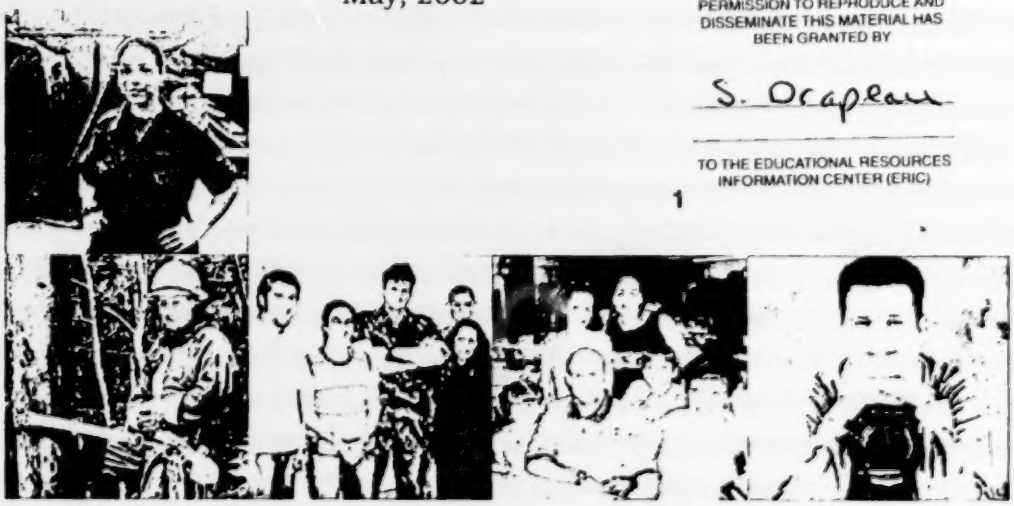

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Early signs of success: A case study in the organizational transformation of a community college.

Abstract

Early signs of success: A case study in the organizational transformation of a community college.

The arrival of a new president in 1998 at this community college launched a process of fundamental organizational reform championed by a transformational leader. The process started with the development of a new Strategic Plan. Two years later, evidence is mounting that the change underway is transformative in nature and scope. A literature review on organizational transformation, results from employee surveys, analysis of college documents and focus groups with internal and external stakeholders are used to explore the change process.

Introduction

This paper presents a case study in organizational transformation. The community college studied here is a multi-campus community college system with a province-wide mandate. The arrival of a new College President in 1998 created an opportunity to start a process of fundamental organizational reform championed by a transformational leader. The change process was launched through a highly collaborative process to develop a new Strategic Plan and engage in the development of a shared vision for the college.

A literature review of the themes of organizational transformation provides theoretical constructs for organizing the inquiry process. Organizational transformation is characterized by large-scale, rapid and discontinuous change within an organization and often is triggered by a sudden change in the external environment, a change in leadership, or both. Many of the articles and books reviewed present case studies of successful transformations and unsuccessful attempts at transforming organizations. Several authors suggest that transformational or higher-order change can be accomplished only when all dimensions of organizational activity are changed concurrently. High on most lists of importance for attention in the change process are the Mission, Vision and Values of the organization, deemed critical for successful change in the culture, structure and processes that will ultimate sustain a changed organization. These studies will be briefly explored to find one or more evaluative models that can be applied to this case. A Taxonomy of Organizational Change is presented and used as a summary checklist of the necessary conditions for an effective organizational transformation. This checklist is used to summarize changes in the College through two significant phases of change.

It is now nearly three years since the Strategic Plan, including Mission and Vision statements and articulation of organizational Values were approved by this College's Board of Governors and implementation of new Strategic Directions began. Evidence is mounting that transformation is well underway. This study will review and evaluate evidence of a sea change in this college and assess the impact of the strategic planning process itself in establishing an enabling context, and organizational processes and structures that would support change of this scope.

The principal body of objective evidence of change in this college lies in the job satisfaction of its employees. An institution-wide survey of employees has been conducted twice, first in 1999 at the same time as the new Strategic Plan was being ratified and the second

survey was conducted in the Spring of 2001. In both cases at least 86% of the faculty and staff participated in the survey. There were significant improvements in employee satisfaction with their work environment, relationships with supervisors and managers, perceptions of their power to participate in and influence decision making, leadership and communications. This case study reviews the key findings of the surveys and makes observations about the changes in the institutional structures, processes and culture that have occurred.

Additional evidence of changes in the dominant culture of the college will be sought through an ethnographic analysis of key college documents including:

- correspondence and internal reports announcing and evaluating college initiatives associated with the implementation of the Strategic Plan.
- annual reports and other marketing and promotional material directed primarily at audiences external to the college.
- the proceedings of two College-wide staff Summits, also held in 1999 and 2001. These events also generated high participation levels with 883 and 955 participants respectively, well over 80% of employees in both cases. These Summits provided an opportunity for employees spread across hundreds of miles (kilometers) to come together. The meetings also provided opportunities to share and discuss issues of common concern.
- Personal reflections and evaluations of the College environment are reviewed. Many of these are produced by faculty and professional staff completing adult education diploma courses offered by the College, including "Working Effectively in Organizations" "Supporting Student Success" and practicum reports from the diploma program.

The analysis of these documents will look for evidence of an evolving pattern in the language of college discourse, evidence of cultural change and spreading understanding and acceptance of the tenets of the Plan.

Finally, the transformation in this college is far from complete. In a time of continuous change, it is important to identify the starting and end points of a transformative change process. The beginning, in this case, can easily be identified as three years ago (the Fall of 1998). However, the end point of this transformation may not be known for some time yet. One author warns against the temptation to declare victory too soon (Kotter, 1995). "Until changes sink deeply into a company's culture, a process that can take five to ten years, new approaches are fragile and subject to regression." This case study presents only the early signs of success in transforming a community college system into a system capable of responding to community needs from the grass roots while operating under the tenets of a unifying Vision and Strategic Plan.

PART ONE: TOOLS FOR EVALUATING CHANGE

Certainly a great number of change initiatives have been undertaken in the Nova Scotia Community College. But have all these changes resulted in a fundamental restructuring of the institution? Do the changes add up to a transformation? What tools are available to the Institutional Researcher to determine both the quantity and the quality of change?

There isn't a single diagnostic tool that can be adapted to all organizations to assess whether a change agenda results in a fundamental transformation of the organization. That is partly, as I have come to realize in an exhaustive search for such wisdom, because the dimensions of change are unique to every situation. Assessment of change in each organization requires a triangulation of evidence through multiple methods of research to

bring the assessor closer to understanding whether the documented changes amount to transformational or incremental change.

So, what tools are available to assess the nature of change in the Nova Scotia Community College? Three different paths of inquiry are used here.

1. First a search of the literature resulted in the development of a checklist of components necessary for an effective organizational transformation. This checklist is used to provide a summary of the steps taken to effect change in the College, and a summary diagnostic tool as well that gives the reader a sense of where we are on the continuum of change. The summary of our progress is drawn from a more detailed case study presented as a second part of this project.

2. Second is an overview of the progress of the organization drawn from two employee satisfaction surveys, completed in 1999 and 2001. Measures of employee satisfaction are included in the College's system of Key Performance Indicators and provide important evidence of organizational health and progress. These surveys were also timed such that the pulse of the organization was taken at the beginning of the formal change process in 1999, and again two years later, after many changes have been introduced but are still in early phases of implementation.

3. Third is a qualitative look at the change process from individual and College-wide perspectives. Personal reflections and evaluations of the College environment are reviewed. Many of these are produced by faculty and professional staff completing adult education diploma courses offered by the College, including "Working Effectively in Organizations" "Supporting Student Success" and practicum reports from the diploma program. Articles and citations recognizing a new dynamism in the College are also presented.

1.0 A Taxonomy of Organizational Change

An extensive literature search on the dynamics of organizations and change has led me to try to organize the necessary conditions for successful organizational change initiatives into a taxonomy of sorts. In the following sections I will provide a brief narrative of this taxonomy as it has unfolded in my path of inquiry. This process of searching and sorting has also led me to some of the specific institutional research already available in our institution that I will draw upon to reach my conclusions about our progress on a journey of transformation.

First, though, two quick observations on the taxonomy. The steps are not necessarily linear, or even in the right sequence as presented here. There are many visual representations of change processes that attempt to map the sequencing, flow, pre-requisite and concurrent factors as well as the cyclical nature of continuous improvement. There are too many models of change to completely map and compare. Suffice to say that these elements are roughly presented in a sequence starting with the most fundamental pre-requisites for an effective change agenda. First are those things needed to initiate and anchor a change process, followed by the logistics of people, processes and structures, and finishing with the consolidating efforts needed to ensure an effective transformation.

Secondly, not every model includes every factor exactly in the way it is presented here. These are the recurring themes that seemed to emerge in some form or another in the majority of the literature studied. And the titles for each factor are entirely my interpretation of the notion that best describes each factor.

1. ***A compelling reason for change:*** Many authors who cite this factor as a pre-condition for a successful change process argue that there must be a shared understanding across the organization of the reasons for change in order to gain the commitment of employees to engage in a change process. Second, a widely communicated and well known driving force or reason for change can help align the change effort in a productive direction. It seems like an obvious starting point for a change process, but is not mentioned in all cases. Perhaps this is because the authors have started from an assumption that the reason for engaging in a change process is already well known by the people in the organization. When this factor is cited as important, it is often in the context of discovery and commitment. Quinn & Rohrbaugh (1981, 1983) identify growth, resource acquisition and survival as three common reasons for undertaking a change process.

2. ***Leadership:*** Everyone is in agreement on this factor. The right kind of leadership is needed to effect change in an organization, particularly change of a transformational nature. An effective leader in a transforming change process is one who can help the organization develop a shared vision and continue to present the change process in a visionary way (Baldrige, 2001), act as a catalyst for changes throughout an organization (Rockford Consulting Group, 2000), practices consistent leadership, models the expected behaviors and demonstrates the patience and tenacity to see a change process through its most difficult phases (Trahant, Burke & Koonce, 1997).

3. ***Vision and values:*** The more extensive the change needed in an organization, the more important it is to create a vision that can be shared on some level by everyone in the organization. People involved in a change process must have some understanding of what the destination looks like. At the very least the vision must provide clarity for the organization as to the nature of the journey. Barrett (1998) combines the articulation of a compelling vision with the articulation of values, labeling the two as a need for a strong core ideology to move an organization forward. Among the key principles underlying a Total Quality Management (TQM) initiative is the concept of a system of shared values. It is a primary role of leaders to help the organization shape, articulate and adhere to shared values, beliefs and behaviors.

4. ***A plan and a planning culture:*** Sounds obvious but many change initiatives forge ahead without a structured plan. The most important features of a good Strategic Plan include:
    - Identification of key directions or initiatives to be undertaken
    - Identification of the milestones of achievement, specific performance outcomes
    - Articulation of the main planning processes that will be used to implement the plan

5. ***Outward Focus:*** Organizations cannot sustain themselves in the absence of an understanding of the world around them. At its very basic level, every organization must understand and respond to its customers' needs. But most assessments of success and failure in organizational transformations support a conclusion that organizations cannot stand apart from the world in any sense. They must be well tuned to the social, cultural, business and environmental needs of the community, and ideally play an positive, activist role in sustaining the community itself. Barrett (1998) advocates measures focused on community and societal impact with a global focus as a key part of a Balanced Needs Scorecard. Both the Baldrige framework and the National Quality Institute's (NQI) Public Sector Excellence framework include deliberate attention to the external environment through measures of community, citizen and stakeholder satisfaction measures.

6. ***Emphasis on Quality:*** The best plans in the world are doomed to fail if an emphasis on quality is not deeply embedded in the psyche of the organization. Quinn and Rohrbaugh (1983) place quality at the core of their Competing Values Framework for Organizational Effectiveness. Similarly the Baldrige, NQI and TQM frameworks start with quality as the foundation piece upon which all processes are built.

7. ***People, people, people:*** People make organizations work, period. The organizational change frameworks that are included in this taxonomy devote a great deal of their analysis to the dynamics of how people function in organizations. The overall schema for effective organizations requires organizational processes and structures where employees have opportunities for individuals to grow and make meaningful contributions to the organization; are empowered to innovate and take rational risks that will propel the organization forward; express trust in the organization and expect reciprocation of their individual commitment and; understand how their work contributes to the organization as a whole. Following is a sampling of these requirements as expressed by the authors and architects of the frameworks:

   Watwood: Framework for Pro-Active Change
   - Empowered employees, innovation

   Barrett: Balanced Needs Scorecard
   - Values congruence between individuals and organization
   - Engagement achieved through cohesion, trust, diversity, mutual accountability
   - Organizational consciousness brings release of innovation and creativity

   Baldrige: Excellence in Higher Education 2001 Framework
   - Support and measure professional development, employee satisfaction, faculty and staff workplace climate

   National Quality Institute, Public Sector Excellence Framework
   - Organization has a people focus, includes measures of employee satisfaction

   Total Quality Management, Principles and Imperatives
   - Cascade training efforts, include opportunities for celebration, recognition
   - Develop service relationships with internal customers
   - Employee empowerment through widespread use of teams

   Rational Edge Strategic Services
   - Acquire and develop new employee skill sets
   - Demand for change is built from within
   - Find champions at all levels

   Boyett & Boyett, Seven tips for Managing Organizational Change
   - Implement training, recognition and awards programs
   - Build a strong, committed top management guiding coalition
   - People don't resist their own ideas.

   Quinn & Rohrbaugh, Competing Values Framework
   - Cohesion through employee morale

   Rockford Consulting Group, Implementing Radical Change, the Right Stuff
   - Extensive education and training at all levels, invest in people
   - Find the right attitude – this is a collective effort, no sacred cows
   - High employee involvement through widespread use of teams

   Trahant, Burke & Koonce, 12 Principles of Organizational Transformation
   - 2. Enlist people's passion and energy ...
   - 4. To change culture you have to change people's behavior
   - 7. Give employees what they need to succeed or get out of the way
   - 8. Teamwork is essential to success
   - 9. A productive employee is a happy employee
   - 11. Remember, employees are people too.

8. ***Collaborative Organizational Architecture:*** No one organizational structure is advanced among the frameworks. Instead they mainly offer advice such as: delayer

management (Rockford Consulting Group), establish lateral processes (Lawlor), keeping structure flexible during active change phases (various), redesign work through collaboration and teams (TQM, Watwood), destroy functional silos and continue to ask the question "How do reporting relationships and lines of business affect organizational effectiveness?" (Trahant, Burke & Koonce). Meanwhile Boyett & Boyett advise, "Keep it complex. Change everything".

9. ***Work hard at alignment:*** By all accounts alignment is one of the most difficult issues faced by organizations undertaking large scale change initiatives. This is also where many organizations fail to achieve the new vision they have created. Alignment requires a start-to-finish approach. There must be solid alignment among the senior team before moving forward. "If only one or a few senior managers is comfortable describing the future in clear, consistent and compelling language, more work is needed on alignment." (Janus Global). Everything is connected, even in what seems to be a small scale change. A comprehensive and systematic approach is needed (Rockford) to ensure that concurrent changes in processes, systems, structures and performance are integrated and coordinated to maximize alignment. Some of the tools for achieving alignment suggested by the frameworks studied include:
    - Use shared values to achieve alignment of organizational priorities (Barrett)
    - Ensure line management ownership of change (TQM)
    - Overhaul incentives and rewards systems in advance (Rational Edge)
    - Ensure that customs and norms and physical environment will support alignment (Boyett & Boyett)
    - Establish and communicate organizational rythyms, key business processes
    - Pay attention to the fit between the skills people have and the work they do (Trahant, Burke & Koonce)
    - Align communication of core messages – Vision and Urgency. Use a variety of communication tools to keep the change process top of mind throughout the organization.

10. ***Measure, monitor and manage performance:*** The collective and individual behavior of people in an organization will change during the transition or transformation of an organization. Count on it. The alignment goal in an change process is to ensure that people throughout the organization are changing their behavior in ways that are positively aligned with the new vision and mission of the organization. In order to do that, people need to know
    - what behaviors are expected,
    - how their individual and team performance will be measured and rewarded,
    - what are the consequences of inaction or inappropriate action, and
    - what organizational priorities will be measured and how individuals can contribute to the achievement of those priorities.

There are a variety of tools and processes that can be used to provide clarity, feedback and support, and incentives to employees. The specifics of what tools are used are less important than a systematic approach to ensure that individual milestones of success explicitly linked to organizational priorities are incorporated into performance management objectives for every employee. Doing this effectively requires careful attention to the translation of organizational priorities into individual or team priorities as the performance measurement and management processes are cascaded throughout the organization.

In addition to the measurement and management of individual performance, a well balanced set of indicators is needed to monitor the progress of the organization as a whole. Most authors advocate a balanced approach: that is the creation of a series of indicators that will provide knowledge about the status of the whole organization when the health of

its constituent parts are assembled into one, high level report. Again there are several well established tools for measuring key outcomes of the organization, any of which will be effective provided that the tools chosen fit well with the organizational culture, structures, processes and systems of the specific organization. The choice of a specific framework should be tailored to the needs of an organization.

11. ***Manage knowledge and communications:*** People are communicators. They learn about the world around them and make decisions about what actions to take based on the messages they receive. They look for reinforcement of themes through symbols, consistent messaging, and the behavior of leaders and others around them. The will seek feedback but will act in its absence. They will offer feedback that must be heard and addressed by leaders. They will filter out what they perceive to be distracting noise. The effectiveness of any change initiative will ultimately be determined by the actions of individuals. If there is clarity, context, consistency and value in every piece of communication, whether formal or informal, there is a higher likelihood that a change initiative will succeed.

"Discontinuous change calls for ways to help participants visualize and become committed to a future for which they have few, if any, reference points. Intense change requires the deployment of multiple communication efforts simultaneously. Large and complex organizations demand a strategy targeted to multiple audiences." Janus Global.

12. ***Demonstrate patience and tenacity:*** There are no quick fixes when it comes to organizational transformation. A great number of changes can potentially be made in an organization in a short period of time. But until the changes take hold, becoming deeply engrained into the organizational culture, there will be a tendency to return to the old ways of doing things. Even smaller scale change agendas require patience and tenacity to see them through. (Rockford) Many authors urge leaders to celebrate early wins through ceremonies and events, but warn them not to declare victory too soon.

The challenges for leadership are twofold: continuing to instill a sense of urgency to help mobilize and sustain the change effort, while making the longer term commitment to change needed. Leadership in this instance is a combination of ongoing organizational visioning and navigation of organizational progress towards milestones on the journey of change. Leaders are the pacesetters of change. (Rational Edge)

13. ***Culture shift – built in change resiliency:*** The dominant message in the literature on organizational change is that the ability to continue to change and transform will be the hallmark of effective organizations for the foreseeable future. Society itself is in the throes of discontinuous change; a fundamental transformation where knowledge is the pre-eminent currency of cultural, social, economic and human capital. Ultimately a change agenda for any organization will only be successful if it creates change resiliency as a significant outcome of the change process itself. This is one of the most difficult challenges that leaders will face. Given human nature to focus on the destination, leaders must be able to answer the question "Are we there yet?" that inspires people to believe that they are making significant achievements at the same time as instilling in them the passion for the continuing journey ahead.

1.1 Mapping organizational change in the Nova Scotia Community College: Using the taxonomy to build a checklist

The following Checklist is used to summarize the changes in the Nova Scotia Community College using the Taxonomy developed above. A more detailed narrative of the changes in the Nova Scotia Community College is provided in a Case Study provided in the second part of this paper. The table only provides a summary of the significant changes that have occurred.

	1993	*1994-1998*	*1998-2002*
Change Driver	Survival – college is dysfunctional	New paradigm in external environment – knowledge economy	Growth & Resource Acquisition – leadership of new external paradigm
Leadership	Basic structures lacking – 18 autonomous campuses	Leadership focused on building basic structures	Leadership focused on forging a new vision, transforming organization
Vision & Values	Neither articulated	Beginnings of discussion of an ideal future state	Explicit framing in Strategic Plan – migration towards fulfillment
Strategic Plan with focused Mission		Departmental business plan – loosely framed mission statement	Forward driving Strategic Plan with tight mission and focused directions
Planning Culture		Ad hoc development of processes	Deliberate -Organizational Development Office
Outward Focus	Uncoordinated – focused only on local community needs	Program renewal – province wide coordination and need	• Regular environmental scanning • Org. boundaries externalized through Mission • Engaged in partnerships, public policy agenda related to Mission
Quality	Random – undocumented pockets	Program renewal processes Some program accreditations Quality concept is perception bound	• Quality is becoming process driven – and focuses on the customer, desired outcomes • Outcomes are measured and some are managed
People	PD is nascent and certification driven	Key PD tools are brought in house and linked to strategic goals	• PD internalized for all employee groups, required elements for faculty to build teaching quality, focused on achieving College Vision • Org. Development Office locus for innovation, engagement, celebration, satisfaction and performance management
Org. Architecture	18 autonomous campuses with support services contracted to government	Most college-wide planning and management structures in place	• Moving from vertical silos with top-down roll out of initiatives to matrix structure with shared accountabilities – structures are in place, processes to support structures under development

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Alignment		Building leadership team aligned with change needs Governance structures established New Collective Agreements reflect changing directions	• Establishment of Academic Schools • Quality process development • Content of PD alignment with strategy • Performance Management linked to key organization cycles • Communication to build knowledge of key directions • Systems designed to enhance knowledge management • Coordination of Business Cycles
Measure, Monitor, Manage Performance	Only graduate employment outcomes measured – poor performance	Beginning of implementation of annual performance appraisals Publication of financial and basic enrollment data	• Performance management tools currently being rolled out throughout organization • Process beginning to integrate performance measurement and accountability planning into key business cycles. • Growing number of KPI's tabled with Board – about to begin 2-3 year target setting for KPI's
Manage Communications		Establishment of Committee of Principals to standardize messaging Public Affairs Office established	• Senior Leadership Forum established • All staff Summits used to exchange ideas and bring people throughout the College face to face • Most major initiatives are collaborative, invite input • Follow up on plan implementation, implementation of major initiatives • Continual refocusing of target messages by leadership • President visits campuses regularly for process checks, issues identification and communication of key change messages
Patience & Tenacity		Initial expectations for a quick fix	• Growing understanding that change is continuous • Continuous refocusing of key change messages by leadership to shape expectations
Change Resilient Culture Shift	About to self destruct	Functional management and leadership but not ready for continuous change	• Experiencing change fatigue – Are we there yet? • Current work focused on culture changes and processes that will support ongoing change.

Based on the summary, it is clear that there have been two distinct phases of change so far. The first phase that occurred between 1994 and 1998 was driven by a pressing need to build a functional public community college system in the province. A system was needed that could at least meet basic public policy objectives such as improving the overall educational attainment of the population and ensuring efficient matching and movement of skills from the learning environment into the labour market. This first round of change, driven by exigency, did not transform the College, but was clearly necessary to set the stage for an effective transformational change process.

The second phase of change built upon the first. The beginning of this phase is marked by the arrival of a new President, hired specifically for his capacity to lead a transformational change process in the College.

Once a basically functional college system was fully operational, attention could then turn to a fundamental shift in the structures of society and how the College would position itself in the knowledge economy. The case study reveals that a great deal of change has been initiated throughout the College, guided by a new Strategic Plan, featuring widely shared Vision, Mission and Values statements and bold new Directions. Three years into implementation of the Plan, College leaders are beginning to put in place the processes and systems that will support the structural changes. The College is now in a period where its success in alignment of the College's day to day operations and strategic path will ultimately determine the success or failure of the transformation effort. The key challenge in the coming two years will be to help sustain the momentum of the enthusiasm generated by the new Plan.

1.2 Measuring the impact of change – Employee Satisfaction

Changing the attitudes, beliefs and behavior of employees to align with new organizational directions is critical to the success of any change agenda. In the absence of behavioral changes, made sustainable by employees who are committed to the organizational changes sought, organizational transformation cannot take place.

A decision was made by NSCC leaders early in the change process that employee commitment, satisfaction and understanding of the changes undertaken must be measured and actions taken to address the problem areas identified. A baseline employee survey was conducted in the Winter term of 1999, at the same time as the Strategic Planning process was nearing its end. The survey process itself was a collaborative one, drawing on the advice and help of a representative Task Force of employees. The Task Force participated in the questionnaire design and methodology, led campus and unit teams to ensure widespread participation, and made a series of recommendations to the College Executive drawn from the survey results. In turn the Executive offered a response to the Task Force Recommendations and urged each campus to act on the concerns raised. Each campus was provided with their results, benchmarked against College-wide means. Campus principals were charged with addressing both College-wide and campus specific issues arising from the survey.

A progress report detailing actions arising from the 1999 survey was assembled early in 2001 and set the stage for a second survey to be completed 2 years after the first one. The same collaborative process was used the second time around, using a Taskforce with some members from the 1999 group and some new members added as well.

Results
A high level of participation was expected and achieved in the first survey. Of the 974 surveys circulated 870 completed surveys were returned, a participation rate of 89%. At the beginning of the process for the second survey, there was less certainty about the

participation of employees in the survey. A great deal would hinge on whether employees felt that the concerns they expressed the first time had been addressed. A high level of participation was again achieved. 86% or 972 of the 1,132 surveys circulated were returned, and the Taskforce and Steering Committee interpreted this to be a good indicator that this was an effective tool for discerning and addressing employee concerns with respect to their working environment. A comparison of the results between the two surveys also revealed significant improvements in all aspects of the college-employee engagement.

Factors Considered Critically Important re: NSCC as a Place to Work		
	1999	**2001**
Treatment of Employees	88%	88%
Quality of Department Management	62%	68%
Organizational Leadership	66%	67%
Job Security	67%	65%
Relationships with Co-workers	58%	61%
Employee Benefits	52%	52%
Compensation/Pay	48%	48%
Professional Development	54%	46%
Physical Working Conditions	43%	45%
Opportunities for Advancement	37%	38%

The factors affecting the quality of employment did not change appreciably between 1999 and 2001. Treatment of employees continues to be the most important dimension of the work engagement by a wide margin, and four of the top five relate solely to the relationship aspects of life at work. Of all the factors related to the employment contract and working conditions, only "Job Security" makes the top five list in importance.

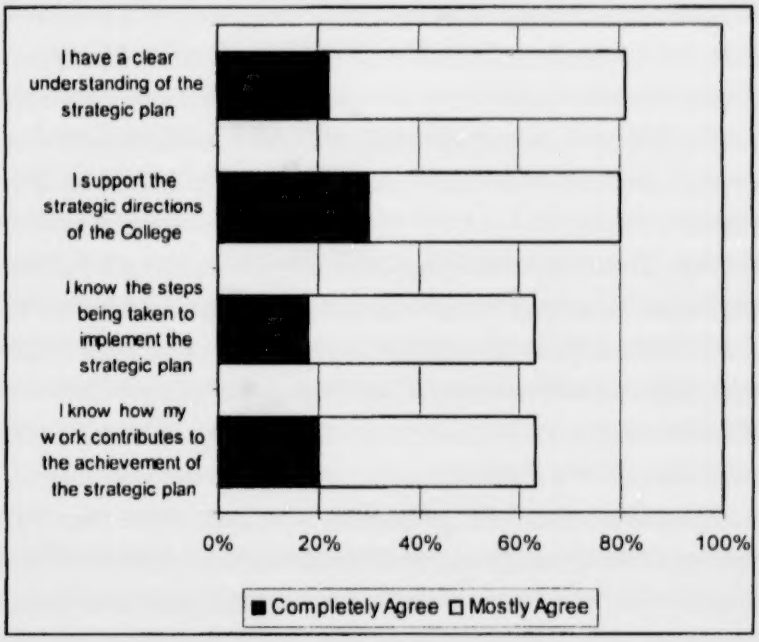
Employees levels of satisfaction with each of these factors is shown in the table below. There has been a remarkable improvement in the satisfaction levels overall, particularly in the top five critical factors. Among the top five, only "Relationships with Co-Workers" remained unchanged but notably sustained a high level of satisfaction during a period of significant turbulence in the organization. Improvement in the top four factors also give a strong indication that people and relationship factors in the working environment were clearly given high priority, even as a period of significant structural change was at its peak. One other factor also showed significant improvement – "Compensation/Pay". During this time, there were not a large increase in the wage structure. However, the first collective agreements with faculty and staff were completed in the time between these two surveys, as were the establishment of pay scales for non-union employees and management. Job descriptions were also developed for most employees during this time, giving more clarity as to the general expectations of each job.

Levels of Satisfaction re: NSCC as a Place to Work			
	1999	**2001**	**Change**
Treatment of Employees	52%	65%	+13%
Quality of Department Management	51%	64%	+13%
Organizational Leadership	43%	62%	+19%
Job Security	47%	60%	+13%
Relationships with Co-workers	87%	87%	
Employee Benefits	85%	87%	+2%
Compensation/Pay	63%	83%	+20%
Professional Development	50%	58%	+8%
Physical Working Conditions	71%	71%	
Opportunities for Advancement	41%	51%	+10%

The capstone question that is used in the College's Key Performance Indicators System also shows a dramatic improvement.

Overall Satisfaction with the NSCC as a Place to Work increased from 71% in 1999 to 83% in 2001 who are completely or mostly satisfied.

A series of additional, specific questions about the work environment, quality of work, morale, leadership, decision making, quality of supervision and quality of communications all confirm the improvements in the College generally.


I have a clear understanding of the strategic plan
I support the strategic directions of the College
I know the steps being taken to implement the strategic plan
I know how my work contributes to the achievement of the strategic plan
0%
20%
40%
60%
80%
100%
Completely Agree
Mostly Agree

Four supplementary questions asked in the 2001 survey confirm that four of five employees understand (81%) and support (80%) the Strategic Plan, and that three of five know how the plan is being implemented (63%) and understand how they are contributing to the achievement of the plan (63%). The widespread understanding and support of the plan give a good indication that development and communication of the Plan were effectively implemented. A somewhat lower but still widespread understanding of collective and individual alignment of work towards meeting strategic objectives provides a significant indicator of progress in transforming the organization.

A commitment to organizational improvement, driven by a regular assessment of employee satisfaction followed by a period of action to address issues raised in the survey, is beginning to emerge in the College.

The seven recommendations are all focused on aligning the performance management aspects of the change effort:

1. The College should continue its efforts to improve its performance management techniques.

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2. Improvement of the quality of management at all levels of the College should be a high priority.
3. Continued efforts should be directed at improving internal communications within the College.
4. Campuses should be held directly accountable in terms of addressing the results of the Employee Survey as a management tools.
5. The quality of relationships between Central Office and the Campuses should be considered an area in need of improvement.
6. A specific communication strategy should be developed to link management initiatives with the survey process to reinforce the value of employees' opinions.
7. Employee surveys should be considered as a management tool supporting a change process, and the surveys should be undertaken at regular intervals.

One unit in the College is making full use of the Taskforce recommendations as a planning tool. The Library Services unit uses them to build an action plan for the unit. In 2002 they have identified 37 action items for Library Services in response to the seven Taskforce recommendations. The action plan for Library Services has also been integrated into the performance measurement and management and personal development processes for all library services staff.

1.3 Ethnography as a Qualitative Tool

It is easy enough to do content analysis to map changes in the language and tone of discourse for the College. The official documents such as Annual Reports are the first to change, reflecting desired new directions in the language of the Vision, Values and Mission. It is also expected that the language of official correspondence will be couched in the new directions. These are not reviewed because they are the templates or models of discourse to inform key audiences about the change process and provide concreteness and context for a new Vision for employees, students and broader publics.

Evidence that changes are taking hold and becoming integrated into the College's psyche often appears as random occurrences at first but gradually the new language reflects a new reality and becomes more commonplace and accepted as the transformed state becomes the norm.

There are some tantalizing clues emerging in two areas. The College's change agenda has clearly captured the imagination of the opinion leadership of the higher education community. There is also a growing body of evidence that employees understand, believe in and are internalizing the new Mission into their daily work. Increasingly they accept the NSCC conceptually as a learning organization. Many of the clues to be found show up in faculty and staff members' reflections on the changing work environment in NSCC. These reflections are solicited as part of the work assigned in CCEDP courses such as "Working Effectively in Organizations" and in their practicum reports.

New champions are appearing outside the College's walls. The following are excerpts from two publications that highlight and celebrate the new commitment of the College to the success of the Province in the Knowledge Economy:

NovaKnowledge Report Card 2001
Examples of Innovation in Action
The following are examples of (four) organizations which are creating a culture of innovation, increasing productivity, reaching new markets and building the knowledge economy in Nova Scotia.

..... with demand for its programs increasing, innovation in delivering training is a high priority. One such innovation is the NSCC Virtual Campus, among the first examples in Canada of formatting apprenticeship training for Internet delivery. Another is the new concept of portfolio education that credits students for the knowledge and skills gained through previous employment, and allows them to demonstrate new applications for their knowledge and skill, thus encouraging lifelong learning.

In order to accommodate these many changes in the organization, NSCC has invested strategically in its people. .....

To keep ideas flowing, the College has introduced new structures. The Senior Leadership Forum brings all of its senior people together regularly to discuss trends and to ensure that all groups in this province-wide organization have the diversity of knowledge and skills NSCC requires to be innovative. .....

Finally, NSCC Measures the impact of these activities through formal surveys. .....

Open to the World, Winter 2000-01
Regular Feature: Navigators

Ray of Light
The activist president of the community college system is passionate about ensuring a bright future for all Nova Scotians

"This institution wasn't created for the people who work in it – it was created for the people it serves." Ray Ivany, President, Nova Scotia Community College.

The one constant in Ray Ivany's life is his "absolute belief in the transformative powers of education." As the president of the Nova Scotia Community College, he's brought about a few transformations of his own, and they're being felt across the College's 13 campuses.

The momentum began to build in May 1999 with the adoption of a new mission statement: "Building Nova Scotia's economy and quality of life through education and innovation." .....

Ivany's compassion and drive to better the lives of Nova Scotians makes him a compelling leader. Nova Scotia's Education Minister sums it up. "Quite frankly, I find him inspirational," Jane Purves says. .....

Ivany describes NSCC's new approach as an activist model. .....

NSCC was one of the first colleges in Canada to adopt a system that credits students for skills obtained through life experiences, employment and volunteer work. But Ivany is also proud to call it "the portfolio college". By the end of the next academic year, graduates will have portfolios detailing what they're able to do instead of just a transcript of their grades. The portfolio process also helps administrators identify student needs and design a program suited to their goals. " ..... It (the portfolio model) has a powerful effect on the individual learner, and we think it has a powerful effect on making education more meaningful for communities and the province."

These are just two examples highlighting the enthusiasm with which the media, government publications and interest groups are portraying the new path of the college. They provide a stark contrast to the statement below from the Province's Auditor General

in January 1994 and a wave of negativism that followed in debates of the legislature, and portrayals in the media. At that time the College was critically ill and not expected by many to survive.

1993 Report of the Auditor General, Province of Nova Scotia
"The Nova Scotia Community College, according to its Mission Statement, has a key role to play in the economic recovery of the Province. At the present time, it is not well-prepared to meet that challenge. There are serious deficiencies in many areas of the College's operations including performance measurement, programs and accountability. ..... Until Government makes key decisions ... or empowers the College to make those decisions, the system is unable to move from the status quo."

Inside the college, the Community College Education Diploma Program (CCEDP) is proving to be an excellent way for faculty and staff to explore and connect themselves to the College's new Mission, Vision and Values. The CCEDP is a ten course Adult Education Diploma that all faculty and professional support staff hired since 1998 are required to complete within two years of hiring. CCEDP courses are delivered primarily by College employees in formats including weekends, week long, on-line and at a Summer Institute that runs for the month of July. Since the first courses were offered in 1996, nearly 200 people have completed the diploma, another 125 are actively registered and dozens of college staff have taken individual courses. More than half of the College's 600 full time faculty have been enrolled in the CCEDP.

These employees understand, believe in and are internalizing the new Mission into their daily work. Increasingly they accept the NSCC conceptually as a learning organization. Many of the clues to be found show up in faculty and staff members' reflections on the changing work environment in NSCC. These reflections are solicited as part of the work assigned in CCEDP courses such as "Working Effectively in Organizations" and in their practicum reports. Following are excerpts from two of the papers submitted by CCEDP students.

CCEDP Course: Working Effectively in Organizations
Assignment #1
Mary Jane Pittman
I am a native Haligonian who remembers very well the old "Vocational School" and the hushed acknowledgements of cognitive inadequacy when a classmate was directed to this institution as opposed to finishing high school or applying to university. As a College we are struggling to move beyond that sometimes deserved reputation. The shift from teaching/training organization to learning organization is at the core of our journey.

..... Fortunately, again unlike the luckless Alice (in Wonderland), we are not traveling alone. Senge's fifth discipline of Team Learning allows us to embrace those among us most likely to stumble on our journey with encouragement and example. ..... Thus we begin our journey to a learning organization/community with able leaders, willing teams and admirable objectives.

..... My first team role is that of a College employee in general – aligning myself with the Strategic Plan and embracing the values in my endeavors.

CCEDP Course: Practicum Report
"My Journey Towards Organizational Literacy"
Sue Boutilier
(Sue offers her own reflections on the mission as a baseline case and conducted informant interviews with 9 additional people representing most of the College constituencies, asking

each person three questions: (1) In your own words, what does the Mission Statement mean to you? (2) What do you think is necessary to achieve this mission? and (3) How do you see yourself fitting into the mission of the College? What is your role in the mission?)

Baseline Case: self, female, Professional Support, 3 years with College
The mission is our lighthouse. ..... (it) solidifies the position of the College in the process of transformation. ..... Commitment to the mission is needed ...however, continued and growing commitment is a long term endeavor.

Case 2: male, Management, 11 years with College
ALL of the people in Nova Scotia can benefit from a higher education. ..... with my own position it is sort of integral that we are offering what people want, where they want, when they want it, so that they are able to pursue the careers that they need to, to help build the economy like that.

Case 3: male, Senior Leadership, 10 years with College
..... as a person who spent much of their life in rural Nova Scotia and saw the impact of a poorly developed college system and the impact of literacy skills that are not being developed and seeing a transition away from resource based industries. ..... the complexity of work has changed, the regulations changed,.so people had to have different sorts of skills to do some of those jobs.

..... 'keep everybody generally heading west'. We want everybody pulling in the same and pushing in the same direction. If we start going off in different directions, we will not reach that destination or those different benchmark points where we can take a rest and ... say 'We made it this far and we did really well' ...

Case 4: male, Operational Support, 4 years with College
It is to me, to hand, to extend your hands to people in need ..... Because the Community College has open doors to many, many, many different people from different walks of life. It is becoming accessible to many class people: rich, poor for all kinds of walks of life.

Well me, my role being, working in the cafeteria, meeting all of these people, my mission every day, coming to work, no matter what my mood is, is to bring good will to the people, no matter what my feelings are that day.

Case 5: male, first year student, Trades & Technology
Making people more employable. That is the main thing ..... getting people so that they can get themselves decent jobs.

Well, for me it is working well. Because I can take these courses, get trained in what I want to get trained in, and I am still able to work full time and support my family.

Case 6: male, Faculty, Trades & Technology
I think that the mission statement does say to me that we are here to serve and better the lives of the people we serve in the community.

..... we have to live by the goals and values of the College. ..... by us being flexible enough . I think that if we show that we bring that to our students that yes, they can count on us. It sort of instills a value that they have the trust in us. ..... It is more than a job.

..... we must ourselves become lifelong learners. It is a never-ending journey.

Case 7: male, Senior Executive, 3 years with College
Well, as they often say bout good missions is they are never truly achievable. So the first thing is that it defines a state that is quite different and quite distant from where we are.

So .... What is required? Time, resources, commitment, patience, alignment of all of us contributing towards this, changes in government policy, a change in the culture of Nova Scotia with respect to how it views college education.

I have a specific role .... It is often described as getting out in front of where we are. In other words to continually, essentially push or pull .... Scouting out and identifying the next milestone for us to focus on in order to keep proceeding towards what we already described or I described as a very long-term proposition.

Case 8: female, Board of Governors, on Board for 2+ years
I have always felt that education and lifelong learning is the essential, I think, ingredient for success today. ..... You need a vehicle like the community college to create that focus on lifelong learning and deliver the programs that are relevant to people as their skill sets need to evolve.

I think my role is to be an advocate for what the college can do. ..... We have a major role in ensuring that a wide network of people understand what we've got to do. Then I think the other role would be we have to ensure that the support is brought to the table to let the college move forward each and every year.

I've seen it happen in the private sector where your ability to instill that understanding (organizational literacy) unleashes a lot of talent that is focused on getting the organization where the organization needs to go.

Case 9: female, Administrative Support, 2.5 years with college
I see so much unemployment in Nova Scotia. I come from a rural area where hardly anyone works more than five months of the year. And I knew that education is the only possible way that these people can get out of where they are. ..... So I came to the College because this is the route today. ..... that is exactly what I came here for, to help people get a job. That is really all this College is for.

It (the mission statement) means that we are going to grow. It means that we are going to make it available to more people. If it is going to build the economy, it has to build it for everybody. Not just a certain few, not just the people who can afford it, or not just the people who come to school in the day. ..... The needs of the workforce, the needs of the employers are changing drastically.

..... we've got to be more accessible. Because our core group of students is no longer high school graduates, I don't think.

..... I've always thought that what I say and do every day will affect someone's education, and it does. In a direct way. How I speak on the phone to someone may be the difference between whether they'll continue to pursue thinking about taking courses with us.

Case 10: male, External Partner Organization, many years associated with NSCC
I guess the most striking this for me is that it is connected to the realities of this province and its communities in a way that often educational institutions aren't.

I think it (the College) is the one that has the most capacity to support learning, without owning it, and to build bridges for those learners for whom it is appropriate and who want to add to their learning repertoire through college programs.

..... I don't think the community college stands apart. ..... What is remarkable about Ray's vision is that it included opening up to those who have been previously excluded. But it also includes advanced and high-end technological partnerships. I think that if there is

sufficient resource and political support, that is going to be a hugely successful span of vision.

While these reflective pieces do not statistically represent the views of people throughout the College and in the community, they do enrich the discussion of the quantified improvements in the College's performance documented in employee, student and graduate surveys as well as financial performance benchmarks . And, they do illuminate the process by which individuals, one at a time, are finding the necessary meaning in the Vision and Values of the organization to align themselves with the change process. This organization is accumulating a well aligned mass that has the potential to reach a critical state, provided that the leadership continues to push and mobilize enough momentum to push the change process over the top.

1.4 What are the implications of this study for Institutional Researchers and Planners?

Mapping organizational progress has always been at the core of the Institutional Researcher's role. Increasingly this mapping function includes measures of effectiveness for a significant change agenda within an institution. Typically, post secondary institutions focus their organizational measures on key outcomes for students, graduates and communities. However good these measures are for reflecting the effectiveness of the institution, they do not tend to accurately track the effectiveness of the change process itself. New measures are needed to assess change.

The Taxonomy of Organizational Change that has been assembled here provides a qualitative checklist that all of the components of an effective change process are in place. Gaps can more easily be identified and systematically addressed by the institution's leadership. Two more-or-less complete quality frameworks do already exist for higher education: The Baldrige Higher Education Framework and the National Quality Institute's Public Sector Excellence Framework can both be easily adapted to track and measure even a transformational change agenda.

Beyond these framework models, this study also reveals the importance of an ongoing instrument for measuring employee satisfaction as a component of a well balanced assessment program for colleges and universities. The financial, student and graduate success and satisfaction measures are no less important, but can be greatly enhanced by adding an employee satisfaction measure to your Balanced Needs Scorecard or Key Performance Indicators systems.

Finally, the act of assembling a record of the changes we have undertaken as a college provides the College's leaders with lots of positive information to communicate just how far we have come to change fatigued employees.

Are we there yet? Not yet, but many of the significant hurdles have been overcome.

PART TWO – CASE STUDY: A HISTORICAL NARRATIVE IN CHANGE

2.0 Background

Nova Scotia is one of the easternmost provinces in Canada. With a population of about 910,000 people and 55,000 square kilometers (20,000 square miles), it is among the four smallest of Canada's ten provinces, both in area and in population. It is about 600 km (360 miles) from one end of the province to the other. Nearly 40% (350,000) of the province's population live in Halifax County that includes the cities of Halifax and Dartmouth, the town of Bedford and numerous suburban and rural communities throughout the municipality.

There are 11 degree granting institutions in Nova Scotia, serving 38,000 students in total. Six of the universities and two thirds of the students are located in the Halifax area. A small francophone college, with about 200 students, consists of several small learning centres serving the small pockets of Acadian population spread across the province. The Nova Scotia Community College is the province's only public English language college. There are currently 13 campuses and about 7,000 students enrolled in a range of post secondary certificate and diploma programs as well as about 500 students in Adult Learning programs designed to provide adults with opportunities to complete high school equivalencies.

2.1 1988 to 1993: Creating a New Institution

The Provincial Government created the Nova Scotia Community College in 1988. An assortment of upgrading, vocational and technical institutions had each been operating as publicly funded entities for a number of years with no coherent structure for non-university post secondary education in the province. 16 institutions were brought together under one name. At that time there were 2 Adult Vocational Centres, largely serving the adult retraining and upgrading market. In addition 11 Regional Vocational Schools had been in existence for about 30 years on average, and originally provided a vocational alternative to the academic stream to high school students. The programming in these institutions had gradually been evolving and now included a range of college level-certificates and diplomas, primarily in office and business administration, and in the emerging world of information technology. These campuses also housed a number of adult retraining programs financed separately from the core campus operations. There were also 3 specialized technical institutes providing the high end of college programming in technology, geographic sciences and marine navigation.

Under the name of Nova Scotia Community College, each campus continued to be an operating unit of the Ministry of Education, with the supporting functions of financial management, human resource services, purchasing, legal and other functional supports provided within the government bureaucracy itself. Initially it was believed that the development of the college would be best served by continuing to manage the campuses through four regional administration offices that had been created several years earlier to coordinate the activities of the campuses in each of four geographic regions. In the 1988 White Paper and subsequent legislation that had created the College, it was envisioned that each region would be governed by a community appointed Board, but that part of the recommended structure was never implemented. The White paper also identified several coordination and structural problems with the existing arrangements that could be remedied with the creation of a province wide system. First were the inefficiencies

associated with each of nearly two dozen colleges deciding independently of each other what programs to offer. Second was the lack of coordination across the system with respect to admission requirements, curriculum and graduation standards. The White Paper recognized the paradoxes of responding to local versus province-wide needs, noting:

> *" Individual and local initiative are commendable and must be preserved. On the other hand, informed observers have pointed out that the discrepancies between the courses and programs offered at the various institutions, taken in conjunction with the rigidities in scheduling at some schools, represent costly dispersal and misdirection of effort from the point of view of the occupational system as a whole."*

The White Paper also envisioned the creation of a Standards Committee that would review and renew programming on a regular cyclical basis, standardize admission criteria, curriculum and completion requirement. The Standards Committee would also conduct regular costing studies of programs across the system and use that information as the cornerstone of decision making for the program review cycle. There is no evidence that the Standards Committee was ever formed.

In 1992, two more regional vocational schools that were being managed by local school boards were brought under the College umbrella. Also in 1992, regional administration of the College was abandoned. A CEO was hired, reporting to the Executive Director of the Community Colleges Branch, who in turn reported to the Deputy Minister of the Department of Education.

By 1993, the provincial government was being widely criticized for doing nothing more than changing the signs on the lawns of these 18 institutions in the 5 years since the NSCC was created. The 1993 report of the Province's Auditor General delivered a scathing indictment of the College's operations within government. The report concluded:

> *"The Nova Scotia Community College, according to its Mission Statement, has a key role to play in the economic recovery of the Province. At the present time, it is not well-prepared to meet that challenge. There are serious deficiencies in many areas of the College's operations including performance measurement, programs and accountability. ..... Until Government makes key decisions ... or empowers the College to make those decisions, the system is unable to move from the status quo."*

There was plenty of ammunition in the Auditor General's report to create a compelling reason to change. The report clearly identified that the status quo was not a viable option. Without a concerted focus on the development of the College, the provincial government would have to face the eventual extinction of its only college level institution in the province. Other factors making this particular year an important turning point included a sweeping change of government, with the newly elected Liberals taking office in 1993, after 15 years of Conservative rule. A brand new government would afford a short window of opportunity to initiative a fundamental change process.

NSCC was a single college in name only. The leadership structure only recently created would not be capable of changing the fortunes of the whole institution without significant structural change. Jack Buckley had been hired as the College's CEO in 1992, but he was three layers of management removed from the key decisions about funding and organizational changes, had no formal job description and little authority over the affairs of the college conferred upon him. Most of the 18 campuses had a principal and vice-principal and decisions were still made largely at the campus level. A committee of principals had been formed but the committee's terms of reference did not mandate College-wide decisions or actions. There was also no governance structure in place. A

Board of Governors had been provided for in the 1990 legislation but had never been appointed to oversee the affairs of the College.

There was a mission statement and objectives articulated for the College by government but there was no formal Vision statement and little evidence that anyone in the College or within government could paint an accurate picture of the desired destination of the College beyond one or two years. The objectives statements were generic enough that everyone in the College could use to rationalize their current performance as of an acceptable level. These objectives were non-specific, with no articulation of acceptable standards neither of performance nor of targets for improvement. A Strategy for moving forward and Values that would help build alignment and commitment among employees were both absent. *The 1993 Mission Statement and Objectives appear in Appendix A.*

The external focus for the College was primarily vested in the growing amount of entrepreneurial activity at many of the campuses, in the design, sale and delivery of training customized to specific employer needs. These activities were campus based and sought to leverage a critical advantage of the presence of campuses in small towns and rural areas – a strong connection to the local community. There was also a strong sense of connection to communities in varying degrees at many of the campuses surrounding the delivery of certificate and diploma programs focused solely on local community needs. There was, however, no parallel focus for the College as a whole. The stated mission of the College was to aid in the economic recovery of the province but there was no vehicle for crafting the relationships and partnerships needed to do so.

While there were undoubtedly some strong programs with excellent reputations, there was no plan in place for the decision making related to core Academic programs; no active emphasis on quality. At that time, over 140 program titles existed, and even among similarly named programs, there was no consistency in the curriculum from campus to campus. In effect, there were 329 distinct programs offered. In 1992 the Department of Education undertook an extensive review of the 133 most problematic program sections, the first such system wide review since the creation of many of the institutions that now formed the college, on average around 30 years ago. The criteria for assessment included cost, enrollment, teacher eligibility for retirement and labour market information. 65 of the programs reviewed were deemed to have sufficient weaknesses to be considered for suspension. However, by the time of the Auditor General's report in the fall of 1993, no action had yet be taken, and it would be the fall of 1994 before many of these programs were suspended.

Faculty at campuses were the primary beneficiary of a largely unplanned delivery of professional development opportunities. The success of faculty in accessing professional development funds largely depended on individual gamesmanship in drawing on funding sources embedded in union contracts or in a PD Budget controlled by the Program Branch of the Dept. of Education.

The management of human resources in the College was exacerbated by the fact that there were two different unions representing faculty, depending on the historical beginnings of each campus. The certification and classification of all faculty was governed by a teacher-licensing program covering both K-12 and community college teachers throughout the province. The Nova Scotia Teachers College operated a nine unit vocational teaching diploma covering teaching theory and practice for vocational teachers in the secondary and post secondary systems. It was provided exclusively for NSCC faculty and other vocational teachers who did not have a teacher's license by virtue of having completed a professional or graduate degree in Education. One faculty union fully funded faculty to take the diploma, while the other only covered part of the costs.

Further, campus principals and vice-principals at one group of campuses were also bargaining unit members on the faculty. The administrative support and maintenance staff across the system were represented by a government employees' union, the same union representing faculty at five of the campuses.

Performance appraisals were not a requirement under any of the union agreements, even for probationary employees. There was an annual system of goal setting and performance measurement in place for the CEO and five of the campus principals, but not for the principals in the teachers' union. A system for all principals is planned for 1993 and work on a faculty performance appraisal tool to begin in 1994.

The organizational architecture of the College was identified in the Auditor General's report as seriously dysfunctional. The CEO was the only position in the Department of Education's Community College Branch directly responsible for the College. Other key functions including financial management and reporting, human resources management and program development all resided in other branches of the Department of Education, and the CEO could not direct these employees to perform tasks for the College. *A visual representation of the College and Department's organizational structures in 1993 is shown in Appendix B.*

Evaluation and assessment activities were largely unplanned and sporadic. Campuses provided manual enrollment reports to the Statistic & Data Entry section of the Department's Policy branch. Day to day student attendance logs were meticulously kept at some campuses, but the volume of data entry from manual logs, and a perception by many that the needs of the College are secondary to the K-12 school systems reporting needs meant that much of the available data was never entered and even more was not reported. There was no information system in place to record and track student files. Some campuses did keep manual records of retention, capacity and graduation rates, but there was no consistency across the system and those places with records did not pass the scrutiny of the auditors. As a result, no reliable data was available about the student body.

There were no common entrance requirements or outcomes measurements for students, effectively making comparison from one campus to the next, even amongst those with the same program title all but impossible. Potential employers of graduates had no standard of quality they could apply and had to rely on their own personal experience with graduates of particular programs or campuses. A graduate follow up survey was completed one year after graduation by the Department, but the lack of accuracy and completeness of student records made the process of collecting completed surveys very difficult and expensive to administer. The results were generally not very favorable to the College, nor were the results published and shared with campuses in a timely fashion. Many campuses completed their own surveys with undocumented methodologies and never bothered to use the Department produced results or actively tried to discredit them.

There had not been a detailed examination of the cost dynamics of operating the college since 1989. As a result, the management decision making of the College could not be guided by simple metrics such as cost per graduate, student-faculty ratios or allocation of College and campus resources by function. Budgeting decisions continued to be made on the strength of the historical patterns, with each campus principal submitting known increases in wage costs and funded staffing numbers. At that time, campuses were operating at very divergent levels of efficiency. A few were severely understaffed in some functional areas, but most were overstaffed. In the absence of any data that could lead to the development of appropriate benchmarks and standards, the budgeting process would always been inequitably distributed.

Given a survival driven need for change and the existing functional inadequacies, the change agenda would clearly have to focus on creating a functioning organization, before any serious attempts at any higher order changes could be contemplated.

2.2 1993-98 Building Foundations for Change

The change agenda for the College picked up substantially in pace during the 1993-94 year. The Auditor General's Report had provided a jumping off point for a discontinuous or radical period of change needed to transform the College.

Immediately after the release of the Auditor General's Report, the Department of Education engaged a consultant, John K. Dobbs and Associates, to assess each campus' enrollment capacity and recommend on how to increase enrollments across all campuses of the College without significant increases in costs. Although the final report, dated January 31, 1994, included 31 recommendations including everything from program rationalization amongst campuses to improvements in the marketing and recruiting efforts of the College, its advice was largely undermined by many faculty and some campus administrators. They believed that the report focused only on the exercise of measuring the teaching spaces on the campuses and setting a target enrollment based on the space and usage type. The fallacy was further enabled by the work of a few people to actively discredit the Dobbs findings on space utilization and by the fact that the report was not widely circulated amongst employees of the College. Fewer than 25 copies seem to have ever existed. A handful of the Dobbs recommendations were acted upon immediately, while others would not be implemented for an additional three to four years. *A summary of the Dobbs recommendations are provided in Appendix C.*

The following is a rough chronology of the change processes as they unfolded over the next five years:

Six new core programs were introduced during the 1993-94 Academic Year, including a standardized one-year Business Certificate called Business Information Technology.

January 1994 The Executive Council of the Province of Nova Scotia approved announcement of a move towards self-governance for the College. The College would become a separate entity from the Provincial government and would be governed by a Board of Governors. Changes to legislation were to be introduced in the fall 1995 sitting of the legislature with a targeted implementation date of April 1, 1996.

It was also early in 1994 that a Director of Curriculum Development was hired, reporting to an also newly hired Vice President, Program Services. Both the new Vice president and the Director of Curriculum were hired from the Ontario College system, one that had been operating since the 1960's and had a well-developed system in place to manage dozens of institutions serving a provincial population more than 8 times the size of Nova Scotia's. Two curriculum developers and two administrative assistants were transferred from the Programs branch of the Department to the College management structure to assist in the program review, renewal and development processes.

Reflecting on her first months in the Curriculum Development role, the new Director noted that she had seriously underestimated the challenges she would face in her first months in this job, but was optimistic that there was nowhere to go but up.

> *"We were starting from nowhere" she muses. "It was a profound eye opener for me that we had no curriculum documents; that many faculty had been doing the same things for so many years, that the whole curriculum was in their heads, but had never been committed to paper, organized and stored for reference anywhere in the College."*

In any case, much of the coordination and documentation of curriculum would have to wait. A 1992 report by the Department recommending suspension and cessation of 65 program sections was the most critical activity to attend to at the moment. In the fall of 1994, 23 new programs were introduced, accomplished mainly by completely overhauling the curriculum in a number of the existing programs, bringing the programs up to a more current understanding of industry requirements. Much of the new program emphasis was in the Applied Arts, Information Technology and Business areas. At the same time, 54 program sections were suspended, in most cases to rationalize or standardize the program offerings across the province. An early retirement program offered to all provincial employees was utilized by more than 100 of the 1400 employees of the College, mainly amongst faculty. Only a handful of layoffs were required to complete this first round of program rationalization.

October 1994 An Annual Report for the College was tabled in the Province's House of Assembly, for the first time. The 1993-94 Annual Report was brief, including a one-page summary of campus-by-campus enrollment and summary of revenues and expenditures provide basic accountability data and a few pages of text highlight activities in the College during the year.

It was also about this time that the Province announced that it would be closing the Nova Scotia Teachers College (not part of the NSCC system), due to rationalization of teacher training in the university system. The facilities, located in the town of Truro, soon to be vacated by the Teacher's College would become another campus of the Nova Scotia Community College, providing an opportunity to create a campus from the ground up, specializing in technology driven applied arts programming such as digital animation.

January 1995 The development of a corporate infrastructure for the College was underway. Two Vice Presidents were hired (Program Services and Extension Services) and plans include the hiring of two more Vice Presidents (Administrative Services and Student Services). A Manager of Information Technology has been seconded from faculty; a Manager of Budgeting and Financial Control seconded from the Department of Education's Finance & Operations Branch, a Staffing Officer and a Communications Officer had been hired. A wave of hirings and reassignment of College and government staff would bring the number of Central Office employees under the direction of CEO Jack Buckley to 22 people by September 1995.

New positions in the central management structure that year included: Managers of Human Resources and Professional Development, a Coordinator for Program Advisory Committees, a Funding Analyst and two Curriculum Consultants.

In addition to its reference to the self governance legislation, the Department of Education's Business Plan for 1995-96 included completing the establishment of a central management structure for the College, introducing new programs at the College's recently acquired campus facility in Truro, and expansion of program offerings in business, applied arts and information technology.

However, the other shoe was about to drop. The College already knew that the federal government, a key source of the public funding to the College was planning to completely withdraw from its seat purchase program for Employment Insurance clients. Their funding

had peaked at $17 million in 1991 and represented more than a quarter of the College's annual revenues. By 1995, this funding had declined to $8.6 million and would be phased out to nothing by 1998. At the same time, the provincial government had implemented a phasing in of standardized tuition fees that would reach $1000 per full time student by 1997 and generate another $6 million in revenue, but reduced its funding to the College by further $9 million during the same time.

No amount of program rationalization would enable the College to continue to operate 19 campuses, and, while program applications by students was strong, not enough tuition revenue could be generated through enrollment expansion to continue operating all of the campuses. The only solution was to close campuses. Five campuses in all were to be closed in the summer of 1996, and after everything that could be done to relocate programs, faculty and support staff to the remaining campuses or assignment to the growing Central Office, another 102 employees would have to be laid off.

Two very expensive programs at the Institute of Technology Campus, Medical Laboratory Technology and Automated Manufacturing Technology were also slated for closure to save another $2 million in the College's operating expenses.

Many of the longest serving employees of the College were severely demoralized by this exigency. Hundreds of their colleagues had taken early retirement or were laid off. Others were moved from closing campus locations into nearby campuses, sometimes with substantially different campus cultures. There seemed to be no favorites: high profile programs had been slashed right along with the basic vocational programs. Rural and urban campuses had all experienced losses. At the same time, the number of people in the Central Offices of the College was mushrooming, doubling every year and reaching 62 people by 1997.

April 1996 All of the provisions of the new legislation to create an autonomous, Board governed College were enacted between January 1 and April 1, 1996. One principal of a surviving campus mused:

> *"It seemed like an April Fools prank gone horribly wrong. The College had won its independence but here we were, each of the campus Principals, trying to help our campuses treat their wounded, bury their dead and move on. No one was even sure that the College could survive on its own and those who thought it might had a deep mistrust of all things centrally controlled. Some thought we were jumping from the proverbial kettle into the fire and that we would be better off for each campus to strike out on its own as an independent institution."*

1996-97 Most of the 1996-97 year was consumed by the processes of establishing functional systems and procedures independent of government. Some very basic needs must be met before the organization could move forward.

Arrangements were required to transfer operating, pension and charitable funds from government to the College. Bank Accounts were established. A financial accounting system was implemented. A spreadsheet based process for submitting and developing campus and central unit budgets was established. Provisions were made for the transfer of utilities accounts and provision of telephone services.

The first preparations were begun to establish NSCC bargaining units with each of the unions covering employees. The faculty, still functioning under two unions, had to decide which union would represent them, and applications had to be made to the Labour Relations Board.

Many of the Central Office employees of the College were still physically located within government. In addition, there were 5 human resources support staff and 4 finance support staff who were transferred from the provincial payroll to the College's. Two office suites are created by renovating part of a wing at the Institute of Technology Campus in Halifax and some 40 people move in. However, by the time the renovations are completed in April 1996, all of the new offices and workstations were already occupied and there were still a number of new staff and managers yet to hire. Within a year, another 3 suites of offices and workstations would be created to house a growing number of staff in Extension Services, Public Affairs, Information Technology and Facilities Services.

At the same time, arrangements had to be completed for the orderly closure of five campuses, including the movement or disposal of a all the equipment and furnishings from the closing buildings, renovations to spaces in the campuses receiving relocated programs and relocation of employees. The departure of two campus principals from remaining campuses added complications to the transitions. The Principal at the Nautical Institute departed just after the second campus in the town of Port Hawkesbury was closed and during a time when trades programs were being relocated from the closing campus building to the newer campus about 3km up the road. As a result, it would take longer than expected for a shared culture to emerge at the consolidated campus. The Principal of the newly established Truro Campus also left at about the same time and while the conversion of the professional and support staff from the closing Teacher's College to the NSCC was taking place. Both principals were from out of province and were never successful in adapting to the small town culture dominant in both communities. A small example of the lack of acceptance by the local communities of these come-from-away Principals is that the local community in Truro took it as a deliberate snub that the new Principal did not change the license plate on her car from Ontario to Nova Scotia plates for many months after her arrival.

During the year new hires in the College's Central Administration include a Vice President, Administrative Services, Managers of Financial Services, Facilities, Information Technology, Purchasing, Customized Training and Employee Relations, a Registrar, an Internal Auditor and a Corporate Secretary to develop the governance structures, policies and procedures needed by the new Board.

The financial accounting system implemented by the College did not include a payroll component and there was still no Student Information System in place to house student records. The decision was made at that time to defer the implementation of a payroll system and arrangements were made to continue to uses the provincial payroll system for at least another year.

The College decided to purchase a Datatel product to create a Student Information System, but it is only a matter of months before the College decided to abandon the Datatel implementation. The implementation faltered and ultimately failed for a number of reasons. The Manager of Information Technology did not have the systems expertise to manage the complexity of implementing such a system. As well he was heavily involved at the time with installing and servicing Network Servers for each of the campuses and the Central Office, and with establishing an inventory and renewal plan for the proliferation of desk top and lap top computers for employees and students across the College. Finally, it was not until the beginning stages of implementation, after several people in financial services and the registrar's office had received some training, that there was a full realization that another complete general ledger system would have to be implemented to support a student records system. The second GL was a complete duplication of the work already being completed for the Financial System. There was also a lack of appreciation that the version the College would be implementing was a Beta Testing version with the final release version some months away from completion. The College was not well

established in terms of policies, practices and business processes and therefore not a good fit for also Beta Testing a new product.

A financial system now up an running relatively smoothly, and the distribution of transactional processing to campus based support staff was accomplished ahead of schedule and with only minor headaches. With this system barely in place and no money to implement an enterprise solution, the decision was made to develop a "home grown" alternative for a Student Information System. A campus Business Officer with strong technical skills was assigned the project of developing the SIS using MS Access. It was known from the beginning that such a system would not easily support the needs of dozens of simultaneous transactional users spread over hundreds of kilometers, so a back-up process was developed where all up to date data would be collected and written into the central database through batches on a weekly basis. Within a year, this system was fully implemented with the first enrollment and registration of students in the system in the Fall of 1998.

Foundations were also laid during this year to begin coordinating the professional development activities of the College. The nine credit Community College Technical Education Program, inherited from the closing Teacher's College had never well suited the College's purposes and was designed largely to accommodate the Teacher Certification process in the Province's Department of Education. A substantial re-engineering of the program, now run by the NSCC directly, provided an opportunity to expand the program's course offerings and begin shaping a new culture for the College. The creation of the Community College Education Diploma Program (CCEDP) was made official with the first offering of courses in a Summer Institute. Beginning in the Fall of 1998, all new probationary faculty would be required to complete the ten course diploma within two years of being hired, The diploma was offered through two month long Summer Institute Sessions and a handful of courses offered in weekend, week long and on-line formats at other times during the year.

Other professional development activities offered in that year were the first of what has now become annual development conferences geared to the Administrative Support and Maintenance employees of the College.

The systemic review and renewal of core academic programs continued in 1996-97, with the suspension of 13 sections in 10 programs and the introduction of three new programs in Aquaculture, Digital Animation and Ecotourism.

1997-98

With many of the basic systems in place to manage the operation of an autonomous institution, attention turned to the program and service delivery processes within the College.

At this point, only one campus had Department Heads to handle the administrative details of running academic programs. Many of the smaller campuses utilized a "head teacher" approach, assigning 20 to 50% of a senior instructor's time to provide administrative services to academic programs, but continuing to charge that time only to the one program in which the instructor taught. Most of the details surrounding purchasing of supplies and materials for shops were still left to individual instructors to manage, and only sporadic performance appraisals of faculty were completed. During the next two years 27 new Department Heads were hired, many from among the ranks of faculty in the College. They received extensive professional development through internal workshops and training activities and participation in management development training. A faculty performance appraisal process was developed and Department Heads were now responsible for conducting the appraisals regularly and managing the performance of faculty.

A performance appraisal tool was also developed for staff and all managers were expected to meet with their staff regularly and manage their performance as well.

During this year, first collective agreements with the faculty, professional support and administrative staff were completed. The faculty negotiation was a lengthy one because the faculty had previously been represented by two different unions, and the old agreement with the one union now representing all faculty was based on a K-12 pedagogy of strictly time bound teaching days and methods that were not appropriate to a college setting. The old collective agreements offered the institution little flexibility in scheduling and usage of part time faculty. It took many months to craft a first agreement first drawing from extensive research as to the employment relationship of unionized faculty in other colleges across Canada, and then working through the details of a fundamentally different employment contract with the faculty.

Many of the functional areas of the College were beginning to forge working relationships with colleagues at other campuses. Faculty Working Groups were meeting regularly and engaging faculty from several campuses in intercampus coordination of similar programs. Faculty were developing working relationships with faculty at other campuses through their participation in CCEDP courses and the Summer Institute. Maintenance and Administrative Support staff were participating in annual professional development conferences. Campus Business Managers were meeting regularly to share ideas and build common approaches for dealing with budgeting, purchasing, provision of ancillary services to students, and handling bursary and awards funds. Managers of Customized Training and Continuing Education were meeting regularly and developing a plan for coordinating their activities throughout the province. The College leadership met regularly through the Committee of Principals (COP) that had been established many years earlier. The COP was evolving into an Academic policy making group, deciding on everything from establishing remedial programs for students at risk to the look of new College transcripts and Diploma parchments. Two key groups of staff remained, most of them classified as Professional Support under the new collective agreements. These were the campus librarians and the student services officers, counselors and registrars.

A study was completed for the College in 1997 that recommended hiring a Director of Learning Resources to coordinate the provision of library resources to students across all campuses. The level of resources available to students at each campus varied widely, from a few of the instructor's texts and resources on the shelf on the classroom or shop to a full fledged library operation with resources for all programs including a range of subscriptions and periodicals to support student learning. A Director was hired and the budgets for all of the libraries were removed from campus budgets and would now be controlled and coordinated by the Director. In the next two years, library resources were greatly expanded by joining a collective of university & college libraries called NOVANET, providing a joint on-line listing of all institutions' catalogues and inter-institutional borrowing privileges for all members. Web page resources were also developed for students and staff, including subscription to a number of on-line databases of periodicals and abstracts.

The other significant function of the college that had only taken limited steps to coordinate across campuses was Student Services. The services and facilities available to students varied widely from campus to campus. The smallest campuses (with fewer than 400 full time students) had no recreational facilities, offered only rudimentary food services and textbook sales. Typically one staff person on the campus was responsible for all student needs outside the classroom, from counsellling to support of special needs. This person also maintained relationships with local high schools and employment insurance offices to fulfill recruiting functions and looked after the admissions, registration and graduation functions. Larger campuses tended to have a gymnasium and only the largest campus had

a swimming pool and ice rink on site. Some recreational activities were supported using these sites. Casual student gathering space was non-existent, and there was no support or space for a student association to function at any of the campuses.

One of the four Vice Presidents included in the 1994 Organizational Chart was to lead the development of services for students, but that position was never filled. A College Registrar had been hired in 1996 to coordinate the admissions, registration, grade transcripts and graduation functions. The Registrar reported to the Vice President, Extension Services.

A task force was created with campus principals; student services staff from several campuses and a staff researcher with survey administration experience. A census survey of students was completed with 77% of students participating in the survey delivered in one-day college-wide. The survey asked students to provide information and their opinions on a wide range of subjects from their assessment of existing services to their interest in additional services, facilities and programs. The survey also afforded an opportunity to collect baseline demographic information that was not previously available. Phone surveys were conducted with other colleges to collect information about the services they provided and service structures in place. Additional research reviewed best practices in student services throughout North America. The obvious conclusion of the task force was that there was a great deal of work to be done to establish more services to students. The principal recommendation of the task force was to hire a Director of Student Services immediately, reporting directly to the President, and to include the Director as a participant at the Executive Management table.

The Director of Curriculum Planning, who had spent much of the past four years establishing the team of people and the processes for regular program renewal, was personally asked by the President to take on this new role. The most challenging part of this job would be to bring a disparate group of staff together and help them function as a team. The skill sets of this group varied widely. Most of them felt overworked and under-supported, and two were off the job on long term stress leave. Among Student Services staff, campus loyalties were still stronger than commitment to a single college model.

Two major efforts undertaken with Student Services staff at that time. The first was to begin formally organizing their functions into admissions & registration duties and student support functions. Secondly, the new Director of Student Services began bringing the student services staff from all campuses together regularly to discuss common issues and plan common delivery of key functions. Early additions to the student services team included a College recruiter and a placement officer, both intended to help coordinate these efforts on a college-wide basis.

The Board of Governors, now in its second year of operation, began to undertake some strategic planning discussions for the College, and also engaged in a Presidential Search process knowing that the College's first president, Jack Buckley was about to retire. The presidential search process was an extensive one and looked to employees throughout the college to identify the type of leadership that would be sought in the new president. A large number of faculty, staff and managers throughout the college emphasized that the kind of leadership needed at this time was of a transformational nature. Having recently survived a major downsizing and four years of unprecedented restructuring of the organization, but also recognizing that much more needed to be done, many people expressed a need for a leader who could continue to propel the organization forward. Others expressed personal commitment to the organization but also expressed that they were feeling demoralized and confused by the changes going on around them. These people were looking for strong leadership to guide them through this morass of change and bring the College some stability.

2.3 1998-2003 Forging a New Vision

1998-99

On October 8, 1998, a new President took office at the Nova Scotia Community College. Ray Ivany, a native Nova Scotian and a fervent believer in community college education as an important economic and social tool, joined the College after spending several years as the Executive Vice President of the province's only University College. He immediately recognized that the commitment of employees to a new Strategic Plan would only be effective if they had a hand in crafting the plan themselves. By early November, a detailed timeline for a participatory strategic planning process was in place and the first round of consultations were underway.

The Strategic Planning exercise was conceived as a collaborative process. A steering committee and secretariat were formed to provide the College-wide focus needed for a successful planning process. The steering committee was composed of 18 members, representing all 13 campuses and including representatives from every major constituency in the College: students, faculty, support staff, professional staff, leadership, and the Board of Governors.

In the first rounds of collaboration, campus principals and key college leaders hosted consultations with people external to the College. Guided by a primer and a series of questions about the College and the economic and social environment, over 400 pages of notes and responses were collected from hundreds of community, government, business and social organizations and individuals. While the external world gave an overall positive assessment of the College, many still viewed the institution through its historical roots. Many participants believed that the College and its ancestors, the Regional Vocational Schools, were one and the same. Among those who were aware that the across-the-board admission standard for College programs was now high school completion, many felt that there was a gap with no vocational alternatives for not so academically inclined high school students. Further, some felt that the College should go back to those roots and provide a place for high school students not destined for post secondary studies. Besides not having a clear image of what the College was today, the majority of participants in some 80 consultation sessions had high expectations for the College into the future. Improving access, reducing brain drain, building local economies, expanding program offerings and becoming more of a community resource were all felt to be important future roles for the College.

The summary of responses from external consultations became the starting point of discussions for three regional one-day conferences of College employees and students, held in the month of January 1999. The major themes raised by the regional conferences included:

- Image – the college needed a cohesive marketing plan
- Program flexibility and access were critical characteristics of all programs
- Access – pathways and bridging programs were needed for many students
- External needs (community, economy, employers) must be addressed
- Success would hinge on the quality of programs and services
- Services to students and a broader student experience were sorely needed
- Improved internal Communications and building a Learning Culture were seen as key aspects of an energized employee base
- Resources were tight – a case for growth would have to be developed to attract the resources needed to grow.

In addition a sub-group of the steering committee was tasked with drafting new Mission, Vision and Values statements.

The regional results and redrafted Mission, Vision & Values were reported back to the Steering Committee who met in a retreat setting for two days in February, 1999. The committee pushed the planning another step forward from the general concepts developed in regional planning conferences. The eight key Strategic Directions that would become the backbone of the Strategic Plan were drafted in this session. The centerpiece of the new plan, Portfolio Education, emerged during that retreat session as a way of carving out a distinctive space for the College. The eight directions identified were:

1. Portfolio Education – NSCC would become Canada's Portfolio College
2. Quality must be embedded in everything the College does
3. Working with Employers of NSCC graduates to ensure a fit between employer needs and college programs
4. Personal Growth / Organizational Progress – a People Focus
5. Connecting with Communities
6. A Distinctive Student Experience
7. Marketing and Promotion
8. Growth & Public Accountability

The newly crafted Mission statement *: **"Building Nova Scotia's economy and quality of life through education and innovation"*** represented a new boldness in explaining the role of the College. The College's success would be marked by the strength of the province's economy.

The Strategic Plan was resoundingly endorsed by the Board of Governors in May of 1999. *A summary of the Strategic Plan, Mission, Vision, Values and Strategic Directions can be found in Appendix D.*

Also, while the strategic planning work was underway, an employee survey was conducted with over 90% of the College's 970 regular, ongoing employees participating.

1999-2001

In August 1999, a first ever meeting of all College employees was held. Summit '99 brought together 950 of the College's 1100 employees at one location for a 2 day event that included powerful opening and closing sessions, dozens of group working sessions, a series of information & discussion groups on selected college specific topics and a social event with entertainment.

It was the first time that all of the College's employees had come together at one time and it proved to be an important opportunity for people spread across hundreds of miles to meet colleagues from other campuses. The Summit was also an opportunity for employees to comment on the newly minted Strategic Plan and begin to identify immediate priorities for action in implementing the plan.

The next two years were marked by a series of initiatives to begin building a matrixed organizational structure and develop a range of programs and services needed to implement an ambitious strategic plan. These are outlined briefly below to demonstrate the large number of change initiatives all undertaken at once.

- A new division was created, headed by a Vice President, Partnerships and Innovation. New and existing functions in this division included:
  - Entrepreneurial activity in the Customized Training division
  - Part Time Studies and Continuing Education
  - A Virtual Campus established to deliver on-line courses to apprentices
  - An International Activities office

- Creation of an Alumni and Fund Development Office to begin organizing fund raising and alumni development activities for the College.
- Initially this division included the Dean of Students and the Director of Human Resources Services – these functions would eventually be moved, the former to now report directly to the President and the latter would become part of the Organizational Development Office.
- Focus in Human Resources Services shifting from an transactional focus to development of performance appraisal and management strategies, employee orientation and mentoring programs, and employee wellness needs. In addition, HR Services would take the lead in articulating the diversity challenges faced by the College.
- Delivery of a value added approach to student success for students sponsored through income assistance and employment insurance programs.

- Under the newly hired Vice President, Academic Affairs:
  - Creation of four Academic Schools and the hiring of four Deans to provide academic leadership in the College
  - Changing the management responsibilities of Campus principals and leading them through a significant role change from primarily academic leader to a role primarily focused on relationships with geographic and cultural communities.
  - Creation of a Portfolio Development Office to launch a student portfolio program and integrate it into the curriculum
  - Development of a College Prep. program to develop working arrangements with the K-12 system so that high school students could take technical college courses while still in high school
  - Development of an Adult Learning program that would coordinate curriculum and delivery for all adult learners at the high school level and help prepare them for further studies at a post secondary level.
  - Creation of an Applied Research Office to develop the research capabilities of the College in key areas of strength
  - Redesigning program delivery, reformatting many one year programs into two year formats, on the advice of both graduates and employers.

- Creation of an Organizational Development Office that would integrate planning, organizational learning and institutional research functions. This office would eventually include the Human Resources Services function as well.
  - Creation of a Senior Leadership Forum of the Executive Team and all their direct reports (Principals, Deans, Directors), coordinated by this office.
  - Coordination of a Growth Study that would identify key areas where the College could grow and build a business case for growth.
  - Expansion of the professional development and organizational learning activities of the College, including turning some attention to the leadership development needs of the College.
  - Development of a system of Key Performance Indicators for the College, and integration of institutional evaluation and accountability with the planning cycles of the Board of Governors
  - Engaging campuses and corporate services divisions of the College in active planning and team management approaches.
  - Creating formal structures and informal networks through which a culture could take root that supports risk taking and innovation and recognizes and celebrates the achievements of people throughout the College, including a coordinated employee awards program and the establishment of an innovation fund to support the development of new ideas.

- Developing College infrastructure
  - Creating a technology infrastructure support team throughout the College, and developing technology resources for both Academic and Administrative uses.
  - Implementation of an Enterprise Information System to replace a legacy financial system, a discontinued payroll administration system and a home built student information system.
  - Completing renovations motivated by an expressed need by employees at the 1999 Summit for office space for faculty. Many faculty across the College could only call a shelf or cupboard in their classroom or shop their own space. There was a critical need for both faculty and student services personnel to have appropriate spaces to meet confidentially with students and community partners.

Two years after the endorsement of the new Strategic Plan by the Board of Governors, there are a large number of change initiatives underway in the College. Casual conversations reveal that many people find the pace and course of change chaotic and at times unfathomable, but the level of commitment of employees to the new voyage is beginning to deepen.

External recognition of the College is starting to emerge – funding has been gradually reinstated to nearly the level they has once been at more than a decade ago. There has been 15% growth in full time enrollments and 50% growth in enrollments in part time and customized programs. The College has become an active partner in the development of provincial economic development strategies and public policy responses to emerging issues such as "brain drain" and "skills shortages". It has forged some key relationships with private and public sector partners in growing and changing sectors in the economy. And, the Province is poised to respond to the need for rapid growth of the College system by providing funds to build and expand campuses throughout the province.

2001-02

This past year has been focused on alignment. The President continues to tour campuses regularly and talk with people through the College and outside its walls about the societal imperatives for change facing the province and the College. His focus is continuing to portray the College and societal challenges in relation to the Vision. He continues to reinforce the importance of alignment of all of the College's efforts so that the whole institution maintains its focus on the Mission and Vision. Environmental scanning and research on local economic and labour market conditions are regularly shared with the Senior Leadership to help contextualize and support decision making. Much of the effort in the College is now focused on consolidating the changes made in the past two years and beginning the process of ensuring that the changes take hold.

2001 is the first year for the widespread introduction of two year diploma programs in every Academic School. Careful attention to the transition details has resulted in a small increase in full time credit program enrollment.

A second employee survey was conducted and a second College-wide Summit was held in 2001. High employee participation in both events, significant improvements in quantitative survey results and positive responses to the Summit both provide evidence that progress is being made.

A significant plateau has been reached in terms of making a matrixed organizational structure a functional reality within the College. Academic Department Heads as in the process of developing a first round of performance objectives for 2002 that reflect both the program development needs of their Academic School and the operational delivery of

programs at the Campus level. Many of the leadership, administrative and support employees of the College have collaborative structures in place ranging from informal regular gatherings of their peers across campuses to more formal dual reporting structures that reflect both their Campus and College responsibilities. Even the Student Services staff across the College are beginning to formalize and strengthen their inter-campus linkages.

The Portfolio Initiative has achieved some success. A plan to integrate a Portfolio requirement in every first year student's curriculum in the fall of 2001 has nearly been achieved. But the concept of a Portfolio College requires a transcendence from the mechanics of all students and employees creating an artifact to documenting their learning to a full integration of the portfolio concept into the psyche and culture of the institution. This is perhaps the biggest challenge of the College's Strategic Plan – placing Portfolio at the heart of the institution – making Portfolio a way of being rather than a stand alone program or service that supplements the programs and services of the College.

The Part Time Studies and Customized Training Divisions of the College have well established structures and processes that allow them to function across campuses as a cohesive College unit. By taking a sectoral approach to program development and acting entrepreneurially, they have successfully aligned themselves with external partners and employer networks. The major challenge facing these units is now the integration of their programming back into the college through the Academic Schools.

Implementation of an Enterprise Information System is more or less complete from a transactional point of view. The HR, Student Administration and Finance systems are successfully ironing out the transactional flows of information, internal roll out of training for new and ongoing users continues. Functional analysts are responding to ad hoc queries for data from the system. The next stages of implementation includes engaging people throughout the college in planning to translate data into useable information and from there to creating the knowledge management backbone for decision making throughout the College. Concurrent cultural changes such as the importance of timely, accurate and complete data entry and verification now need to be addressed to create a successful knowledge management strategy for the College.

The School of Trades & Technology is operating a pilot phase of a Framework for Informed Decision Making that makes the program development and renewal processes more robust and deliberate. The framework is expected to help give a stronger quality focus to program decision making, and will be rolled out to the remaining schools in 2002.

A deliberate mapping of the multiple decision making streams in the College is also underway. These operational cycles and the complexity of their interactions should be better understood as a result. The coordination of these cycles with the evaluation processes, embedded in the accountability framework and Key Performance Indicators, and linked explicitly to the performance management processes will harmonize and align the decision making processes throughout the College. Effective communication of these processes are also expected to add to organizational literacy; to help employees understand how the work they do contributes to the overall strategy of the College.

The Organizational Structure of the College is represented in the graphic in Appendix E.

In his assessment of the College's progress, the President, in his tour of campuses in March 2002, identified the key challenges for the coming year: consolidating and integrating the major structural and program changes fully into the College and maintaining the momentum of the change process in light of a tight budget year. His concluding message with each group:

> *"Defining a Vision was the easy part, about 10% of the effort needed. The rest is alignment, and that is the hard part of helping this College transform itself to lead societal change in this century. Some significant gains have been made, but there is still a lot of tough work to do yet. We have to keep working hard at it for a few more years to make our activist Vision a reality."*

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: 1993 Mission Statement and Objectives

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APPENDIX A: 1993 Mission Statement and Objectives

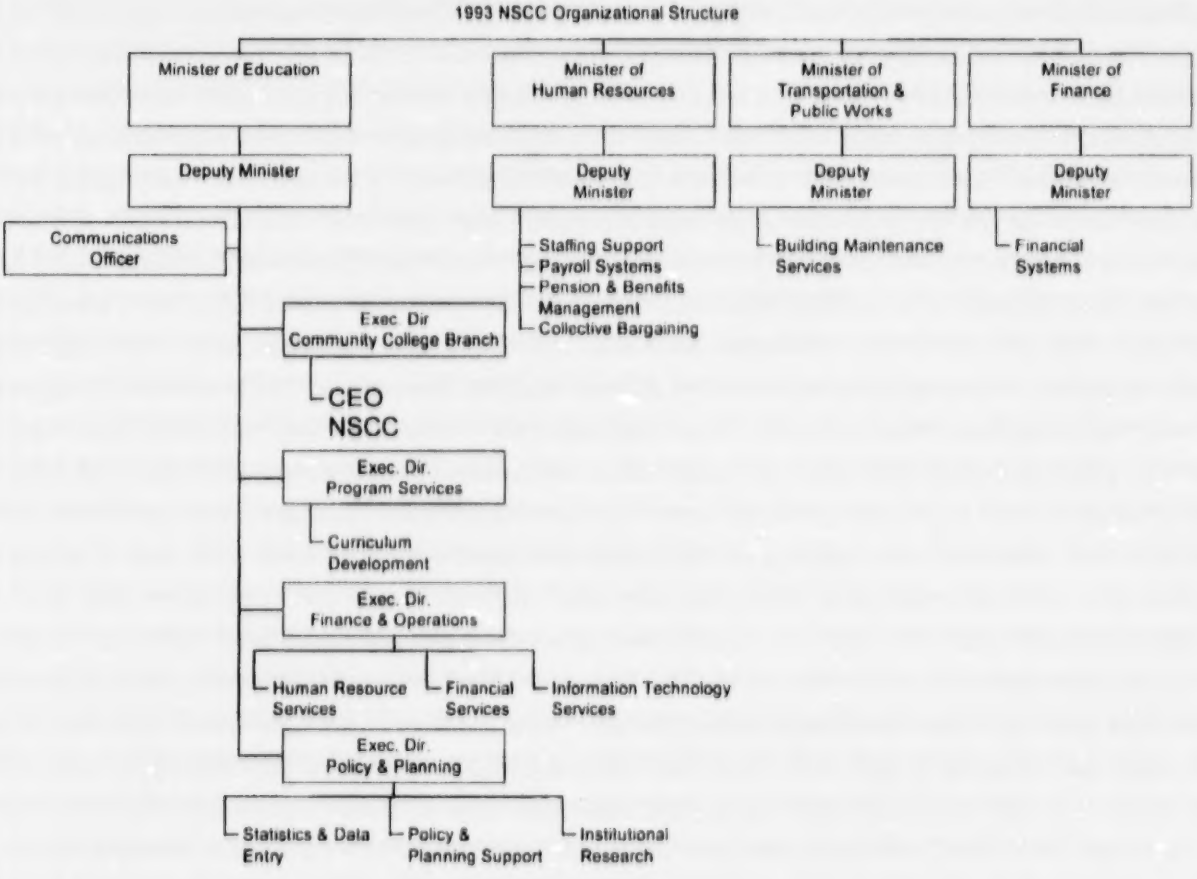
1993 Mission Statement

The Nova Scotia Community College is a post-secondary institution committed to serving the needs of students by offering training, education and the opportunity for lifelong learning. With excellence as an objective, the College prepares students to meet the requirements of the community, business, industry and government. The College is a pro-active institution which takes a major training role in response to the economic development strategies of the Province within a Canadian and global economy.

Objectives

- To deliver programs that produce employable individuals who are highly skilled, knowledgeable and competitive in occupational areas, and possess good interpersonal skills, global awareness, and an appreciation for excellence.
- To deliver training programs to serve students in response to the requirements of the community, business, industry and government.
- To ensure that all potential students have access to College programs, educational upgrading will be offered at all campuses.
- To develop a close liaison with the community to facilitate customized training, on-the-job training, and co-operative programs
- To maintain a collaborative relationship with other post secondary educational institutions to offer student lifelong learning opportunities
- To offer the expertise of the College as a resource to the community
- To ensure that the College's faculty, its primary resource, remains current through ongoing professional development

APPENDIX B: Organizational Chart of Nova Scotia Community College and Nova Scotia Department of Education in 1993



APPENDIX C: Recommendations of the Dobbs Report, 1994 and subsequent dates of implementation

SECTION VIII: RECOMMENDATIONS

PREAMBLE
It is evident from the review of the Nova Scotia Community College undertaken by the consultants, and from the subsequent analysis of the available space, that there is ample opportunity to increase the capacity and enrolment without adding more tuition space. There is not only a considerable vacancy rate in the regular programs, but an enormous unused capacity in the various campuses when the utilization factors are taken into account. The limiting factors to increased enrolment lie primarily in the area of program rationalization. Such factors include the following:

- Continued offerings of low-demand, low enrolment programs that use up substantial funds and tuition space.
- Lack of new programs that have high enrolment and workforce relevance.
- Absence of operating and capital funds to implement changes.

The following recommendations are intended to enable both improvement in program delivery and to increase capacity through a process of rationalized change. Initial changes should be those that do not add cost but still increase enrolment. As changes to programs, governance and marketing are developed, there will be a need to provide initial funding so that long term cost savings and improved program delivery can be instituted.

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS AND ACTION BY COLLEGE

1. Increase enrolment in 94-95 by filling existing programs	Increase of 12% in 95-96
2. Solicit proposals for no-cost enrolment increases from campuses	
3. Applicants in a single database to track campus/program preferences	Distributed admissions back ended into a single database, 1998 Central admissions process, 2001
4. Increase overbooking of programs to ensure meeting enrolment quotas	Confirmation fee and requirement implemented in 1998
5. Suspend low enrolment programs using 1992 working group report as a guide	54 program sections suspended in 1994 and 1995, 2-5 per year after 1995
6. Establish new programs using freed up capacity	45 new program sections in 1994, 36 in 1995, 2-5 sections per year after 1995
7. Programs established under #6 not considered part of core so easier to cut	
8. Reintroduced programs suspended under #5 only as non-core programming	
9. Create Centres of Excellence by encouraging campuses not to compete for some program types	Clustering of programs into Centres begun in 1995 and ongoing in 2002
10. Create a Curriculum Coordination Centre within Community College Branch	Curriculum development office established in 1995, curriculum coordinators devolved to academic schools, 2001
11. Track applicant demand by program	Reporting developed in 1998
12. Recruit casual, unlicensed instructors	Many programs offered as cost recovery using term

from private sector and industry to teach in non-core programs.	faculty beginning in 1995
12. b. Provide periodic short courses in instructional techniques.	CCEDP courses offered to term faculty beginning in 1997
13. Implement required skill updating for full time faculty as condition of employment	All new faculty required to take 10 credit CCEDP diploma, beginning in 1998
14. Renegotiate collective agreements with faculty to increase flexibility with respect to part time faculty	First collective agreement with NSCC under new charter completed in 1998
15. Discourage "waiting for attrition" to deal with necessary staff terminations	Early retirement incentive offered by province in 1993-95 resulting in 200+ retirements
16. Train and support Principals to implement "Fair Hiring Practices"	Staffing officer hired in 1995 – focus for FHP implementation
17. Expand customized training activity college wide	Increased from approx $7 million in 1995 to $12 million in 2000
18. Hire a provincial customized training manager	Manager hired in 1996. Unit leadership created under a Vice President, Extension Services
19. Expand Customized Training Officer roles to include campus wide marketing	Not implemented. Public Affairs office created centrally in 1997.
20. Create campus recruitment teams	Network of registrars created with a College wide registrar in 1996
21. Initiate a planned program of campus rationalization:	
22. a) rationalize administrative, business management, student services across campuses	Some functions centralized college-wide and some functions now shared across two or 3 campuses, 1996-2001
22. b) Downsize or phase out some campuses	Five of 19 campuses closed in 1996 with programs suspended or moved to other campuses
23. a) move fisheries school in Pictou to Nautical Campus, rationalizing marine programming	Fisheries school joined NSCC in 2001
23. b) Initiate discussions with other provinces to create regional fisheries/marine centre	
24. a) Create an autonomous governing board	New Act with autonomous board implemented in 1996
24. b) Ease existing practices against term/casual hiring until board in place	
25. 5 specific recommendations for conversion and better utilization of existing labs, workshops, classrooms	Ongoing since 1996 – College wide Director of Facilities hired in 1997
26. Stop practice of assigning rooms to one program only to get better utilization	Ongoing since 1996
27. Rationalize computer labs by creating LANS for computer labs	Completed reconfiguration of computers, servers college-wide. Hired Director of Information Technology 1997
28. Update outmoded equipment	Equipment and computers for academic use prioritized in annual capital budget
29. Implement a funding formula to increase enrolment and capacity	Studied extensively in 1995-96 but never formally implemented
30. Discontinue busing of students in rural areas	Discontinued in 1994
31. Hire an implementation coordinator for these changes	Several directors hired to implement specific recommendations, 1996 to 2000

APPENDIX D: NSCC Strategic Plan Overview, 1999

Mission Statement

Building Nova Scotia's economy and quality of life through education and innovation.

Vision

Our approach to education will be one that engages Nova Scotians in new ways to apply knowledge and skill. We will integrate our education with community building and economic development. The College experience will inspire confidence, reflection, and self-reliance, challenging people to make use of what they learn, for their own benefit and for the benefit of us all.

Values

Student Success We support, recognize, and celebrate student success.	**Accessibility** We are committed to providing greater access to College programs and services.
Service We reach out to people to help connect our programs and services to their needs.	**Respect** We develop our working and learning relationships from a foundation of mutual trust and respect.
Collaboration We reward collaboration, diversity of expression, and decisiveness.	**Innovation** We value innovative ideas and actions that engage students, employers, and communities in learning and development.
Public Accountability We are responsible and accountable for the public's trust.	**Diversity** We believe that diversity in the College community is a strength that must be cultivated.

Strategic Directions

1. Portfolio Education – program offerings will move from focusing solely on the traditional delivery of training, to a range of options that builds upon a student's planning and portfolio development.	2. Defining Quality – establish a measure of quality that demonstrates the value we add to those who participate in the life of the college.
3. Working with Employers – align our programs with Nova Scotia's economic development, actively supporting the growth and prosperity of new, established and prospective employers.	4. Personal Growth / Organizational Progress – NSCC will be an organization of lifelong learners, whose personal and professional growth is the source of the College's progress.
5. Connecting with Communities – NSCC will make community development an integral part of College programs and planning.	6. A distinctive Student Experience – distinguished for the avenues its gives students to explore employment opportunities, community involvement and personal growth.
7. Marketing & Promotion – actively market and promote its capacity to serve students, employers and communities.	8. Growth & Public Accountability – grow in response to the public's need for a diverse education system that places a high priority on Nova Scotia's development.

APPENDIX E: Organizational Chart of the Nova Scotia Community College, 2000

Nova Scotia Community College

Organizational Chart

NSCC
NOVA SCOTIA COMMUNITY COLLEGE
Education that **Works**

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